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We are pleased to be able to provide input on the impact of having access to secure and sufficient funding for our library WiFi and internal connections. In communities across the country, people turn to the library to use our WiFi on their tablets, laptops, and other devices. Library users are downloading job applications, applying for financial aid, seeking health information, and communicating with family - all dependent on a strong WiFi signal. Increasingly, libraries also provide services that depend on WiFi, like coding clubs for K12 youth. Libraries everywhere know WiFi throughout the library is not a “nice to have” - it's a core community service.

In November 2016, our library had fiber optic internet installed, only because of the E-rate discount. Without that discount, and the current monthly discount we receive, our library would be stuck again with a slow DSL internet. The price of the fiber optic internet, without E-Rate, is too great a cost for our budget. The faster internet and WiFi we have now is crucial to our community. Internet and cell phone service are intermittent in our county, and many people rely on our library, as it is the only local place to use free, fast internet and WiFi service.

Members of our community who rely on our internet for work, school and job seeking have benefited greatly with the upgraded internet connection- they are able to watch videos required by their employers, no more ‘Session has timed out’ messages. The ability to play videos without buffering or freezing has allowed our librarians to take advantage of this resource, formerly unusable, and apply it to programs for all ages and our Summer Reading Program.

With the commitment of the FCC to ensure a library budget of \$2.30 (\$5.00 for a selected category of larger urban and suburban libraries) per square foot, libraries can finally upgrade outdated equipment or plan for new construction. They have confidence that desperately needed support will be there.

Please maintain secure funding through the full five year budget period as adopted during the 2014 Modernization. Our communities depend on that funding.